

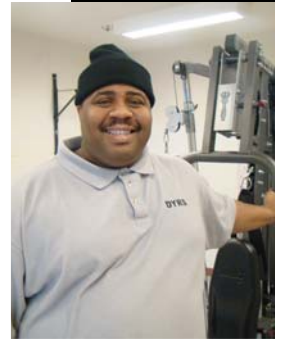
THE ADVOCATE

December 2009

Why I Come To Work

by Robert Jordan, Recreation Specialist at New Beginnings Youth Development Center

I'm **Robert Jordan** and I am a Recreation Specialist at the New Beginnings Youth Development Center. I work with youth in New Beginnings to make sure they receive their daily exercise regimen. As part of the gym staff, I lead and oversee workout sessions in the weight room and teach the young men how to properly stretch their muscles to reduce sports and workout injuries. My duties also involve taking youth out of the facility for cave-climbing trips, white-water rafting, camping trips and many more outdoor activities. I like working with the youth in this capacity since I came from a similar background and believe that they should be exposed to a variety of recreational activities outside of what they're familiar with. My involvement with the youth doesn't limit itself to my position as a Recreation Specialist. When a youth shared with me that his family wasn't able to have a Thanksgiving dinner, I was stirred to provide a Thanksgiving turkey for the youth, and for an additional 40 youth's families and DYRS staff. I believe that if I'm able to have a Thanksgiving, so should the youth's families whom I work with. [\[View video*\]](#)



In The Spirit of Giving

by Bridget McLennon, Staff Assistant, 450H



In the spirit of Thanksgiving, **Robert Bacon, Ward 8 Case Manager**, delivered baskets to DYRS youth and their families in Ward 8. Through a recent partnership forged with the Virginia-based non-profit organization called **Tomorrow's Black Men**, Robert spent time coordinating with the organization to register families in the annual 'Giving Thanksgiving' program and the delivery of the Thanksgiving baskets. The baskets included a turkey, vegetables, desserts, and many more food items which helped to make much needed families have a truly 'Happy Thanksgiving' holiday.

Youth Holiday Podcasts

by Nicole Lee, Director of Advocacy Education, Maya Angelou Academy

Once again, it's the time of year where everyone celebrates the holiday season and similar to last year, DYRS youth will send their recorded readings and books to their children, families and relatives. The Maya Angelou Academy at the New Beginnings Youth Development Center organized the recordings for 30+ youth this year and plan to distribute CD's for folks that are interested this holiday season. An announcement will be sent to All DYRS Staff once the recordings are posted on the Intranet, under the *Listen to Youth Holidays Podcasts* link on the home page. Stay tuned!



Homelessness, Food, Art, Poetry and Holidays

by Arthur Linder, Principal, DCPS at Youth Services Center and Kathy Ashe, Special Assistant



To keep youth engaged and mentally stimulated during their stay at the Youth Services Center, DCPS staff educates youth through various educational activities depending on the topical themes of each month. During the month of November, youth brought awareness on Homelessness through their creative drawings. Each youth depicted a scenario to showcase to DYRS staff on how homeless people deserve shelter, food and a second chance in life. The civic engagement continued during the month as DCPS held a Thanksgiving Food Donation Drive for DYRS youth, their families, and homeless shelters. Youth this holiday season will experience the best of both worlds; food and poetry, as **Anas "Andy" Shallal**, owner of **Busboys and Poets**, joined with other DC poets to share their poetry and host a poetry workshop for youth at the facility. In addition, **Andy, Nora Pouillon**, owner of **Nora's**, **Warren Brown**, owner of **Cake Love** and **Love Café**, **Nizam Ali**, owner of **Ben's Chili Bowl** and **Ben's Next Door**, **Constantine Stavropoulos**, owner of **Tryst**, **The Diner** and **Open City**, **Michel Heitstuman**, owner of **On The Fly**, **Aman Ayoubi**, owner of **Local 16**, **Luis Marroquin**, owner of **Taqueria Distrito Federal** partner with YSC's culinary staff to prepare a special holiday dinner for DYRS youth and staff at YSC. DYRS is working on plans to host a similar dinner for youth and staff at the New Beginnings Youth Development Center.



Government of the District of Columbia
Department of Youth Rehabilitation Services

